K Jacob (E.) (1) 4152

AN EPISTLE IN TRUE LOVE,

Containing A

Farewel Exhortation

TO

Friends Families.

Which I desire also may be Read in their Monthly *and* Quarterly-Meetings, *throughout the Nation of* England.

Dear Friends,

WHO have retained your Integrity, Love, and Life in the precious Truth, and are making it your chiefest Interest to Exalt the same in the Earth: To all such is my endeared Love, in the blessed Fellowship of Life and Peace, beseeching Almighty God on your Behalf, That you

may ſtand faſt in that Liberty wherewith Chriſt hath ſet you free; taking good heed that you be not again entangled with the ſurfeiting Cares of this uncertain World, leſt your Underſtandings be darkned, and you thereby be uncapable of anſwering the End for which the Lord raiſed you up: For although you, who I am at this time drawn forth in *Exhortation* to, may not be concerned in a *Doctrinal Teſtimony*; yet, my dear Friends, you who have known an Overcoming by the Blood of the *Lamb*, and *His Power*, to you it is given, not only to Believe, but, to be as Pillars in GOD's HOUSE. And I muſt ſay, That there is a great Work for you to do in this Day of outward Eaſe; and, were I not preſſed in Spirit, in a Sight and Senſe I have had of the *State of the Churches*, I ſhould at this Time have been ſilent: But now for the Lord's ſake, and the Churches Reformation, I entreat the Faithful, to come up to the help of the Lord, againſt the Mighty.

IF any enquire, what I have ſeen in the Light of the Lord, ſo mightily to obſtruct the Proſperity of Truth in the Earth, I do, with Sorrow, Anſwer, It is **the Spirit of the World, Pride**, and **Covetouſneſs, Fleſhly Eaſe**, with **Self Intereſt.**

NOW that there may be a Regulation, whilſt the Lord's Love and Mercy is afforded, is the real Cauſe of this Epiſtle.

AND

AND the Way to *Promote*, and, I hope, in the Lord's Time, to *Effect* it to God's Honour, and the Benefit and Enlargement of the Churches, is,

First, For the Faithful (who are as Pillars) Fathers, and Mothers in the Church, carefully to obſerve the *Operation* of God's Holy Spirit, and thereby you will be Enabled to ſet up an Holy Diſcipline in your own Families; being often *Inward*, attending upon the *Wonderful Counſellour*. So ſhall you be enlarged, in due time, to gain upon each Church which you belong unto: For, dear Friends, if ever there was need for the Seers to be inward with the Lord, in deep Mourning, the Husbands apart, and their faithful Wives apart, it looks to me to be in our Day. For, Oh! How is the Care and Counſel of the Lord, which was convey'd to us through our faithful Elders, with reſpect to Goſpel-Order, ſlighted; and thereby a Libertine Spirit got up, both in Habit and Converſation: And it is to be feared, that thoſe *Worldly Spirited Ones* rather ſerve themſelves, than the True and Living GOD.

AND that ſuch may be provoked to return to the LORD with unfeigned Repentance, I am at this time concerned, to recommend the excellent Method which *Joſhua*, that brave Captain under the great King of Kings, took, when he had led the Children of *Iſ-*

rael into the Promiſed Land, and divided unto them their Lots, after he had Powerfully and Wiſely gone in and out before them, until, by the Strength of the Lord, they had fought their Battles, and ſubdued their Enemies, taking Cities for them, 'till they were grown a Rich and Numerous People, and poſſeſſed of Vineyards, and Olive-yards ready Planted to their Hands: Then this bleſſed Servant of the Lord, who, no doubt, had a clear Sight of the Danger they were in, of forgetting the Lord, the true and living God, by whoſe Powerful Arm their Fathers were brought out of the Houſe of Bondage, according to his Promiſe made to his faithful Servant *Abraham*. I ſay, This Wiſe Leader in *Iſrael* Commemorates the Mercies, Victories, and Wonderful Deliverances of God to them, without the leaſt Oſtentation, or deſire of Honour, Name, or Fame in the World, or amongſt them; but in a lively powerful Exhortation, expreſſeth himſelf in theſe Words:

NOW therefore Fear the Lord, and Serve Him in Sincerity and Truth, and put away the Gods, which your Fathers ſerved on the other ſide the Flood, and in Egypt, and ſerve ye THE LORD. And if it ſeem Evil unto you to ſerve the Lord, chooſe you this Day whom you will ſerve, whether the Gods which your Fathers ſerved, that were on the other ſide of the Flood; or the Gods of the Amorites, in whoſe Land ye dwell: But as

as for ME, *and* MY HOUSE, WE *will* **Serve the Lord.** Josh. 24. *ver.* 14, 15.— But, Ver. 21, 22. *If ye forsake the* LORD, *and serve strange Gods, then will he turn, and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good.* And the People said unto *Joshua, Nay, but* WE **will** *serve the* LORD.

Dear Friends, Observe what Influence this lively Zeal, and Godly Resolution had upon the People; so that there appear'd a *Willingness* in them to put away those things which *grieved* the Lord, and *hindred* them from *serving* of Him fully and freely, saying, *God forbid, that* WE *should* **forsake** *the* LORD, *to* **serve** *other Gods.*

AND now, my *Dear Friends*, whom God hath *blessed* with a *large Talent* of Grace, by the which you have been *enabled* to make a *good Confession* to his Name and Truth, in *Holiness of Life*, in this Land, where my Lot is now fallen, to Travel up and down in the *Love of God* for no other End, than that an *Increase* of *Love* and *Faithfulness* may be known in the Gathered Churches of Christ. In order thereunto, I beseech you, look into the *True State* of the Churches, and see if you, with me, cannot behold a *great Declension* from the *Primitive Plainness*, *Simplicity*, and *Sincerity* which Truth led our faithful Elders into. Oh! the *Testimonies* they have left us, of the *Care* they had, to *order* their

Converſation in *Words*, *Habit* and *Deportment*, ſo as to anſwer the *Witneſs of God* in all Men with whom they had to do.

AND now with Sorrow I lay before you, That in my late Travels, I ſaw too many taking up a *Fleſhly Eaſe*, by letting an *Earthly Carnal Mind* prevail; even to the *neglecting* the *Aſſembling* themſelves together, to *Wait* upon the Lord, and *Worſhip* Him in Spirit and Truth.

THIS I know is cauſe of Grief to you *faithful Elders*; but that you may be Bleſſed with Peace here, and leave a ſweet Memorial to after Ages, let it be your Care, in each Church, to *ſtir up* the *Negligent* to a *lively* Commemoration of the *Mercies* of God: And with *due Care* to uſe your *Chriſtian Authority*, in the Management and Settlement of your *own Families*, in that *decent Order*, we, through the Mercy and Wiſdom of God, have been *Eſtabliſhed* in. And for your Encouragement therein, the Lord will be unto you a *Sun*, and a *Shield*, and *Grace*, and *Glory*, and no *good Thing* will he with-hold from ſuch, who, in the *Love of God*, diligently *Labour*, *Hope*, and patiently *Wait* for to ſee *Sion's Righteouſneſs go forth as Brightneſs*, and her *Salvation as a Lamp that burneth*; that *the Gentiles may ſee her Light, and all Kings her Glory*.

Oh!

Oh! I have to ſay, Such *ſound* Pillars, keeping *faithful* to the End, ſhall be Crowned with *Glory*, *Honour*, *Immortality*, and *Eternal Happineſs* for ever and ever.

AND if I may yeild you a little Hand of Help, it is farther in my Heart to leave this *Farewel Exhortation*, to all *Fathers* and *Mothers*, *Maſters* and *Miſtreſſes*, eſpecially of the *Younger* Sort; thoſe who have in any Meaſure *taſted* of the good Word of Life, and of the Powers of the World to come: That all ſuch be very careful, to walk *worthy* of the *Vocation* whereunto they have been called, in *Honeſty*, *Sobriety*, and *true Humility*, having your Minds *girded* with the *Girdle of Truth*: So ſhall your Converſation anſwer the *Witneſs of God* in the *Hearts* of your *Children* and *Servants*; and alſo to ſuch who do not yet profeſs with us, with whom you may be concerned. For, *Dear Friends*, your *Candles* have not been *lighted* by the Lord, to be put out again, or you to *hide* the Light thereof from your Families or Neighbourhood, under a *Bed*, or under a *Buſhell*. Therefore I deſire you may ariſe, and *trim* your Lamps, and be *watchful* that your *Lights* may be kept *ſhining*, and *Lamps burning*: For it is not enough *careleſly* to retain a *Knowledge* of what the Lord hath done in *times paſt*; but that there be a *daily waiting upon*, and *ſupplicating* the Lord, for the *renewing* of his

Love and *Life*, that thereby you may be kept *alive* to Him, and may be a *ſweet Savour* of Life, *unto Life*, in your Families and Neighbourhood: So will the Lord be *Glorified*; and your Souls, that are thus *renew'd*, keeping *under* the Power of the *Holy Croſs of Chriſt*, in the whole *Management* of your *Converſation*. You, I ſay, ſhall then enjoy a ſerene *Quiet*, when the Lord is *pleading* with Backſliders, and the Wicked amongſt the Children of Men.

AND *Friends*, this know, That the Day of the Lord's *ſifting* the Churches haſtens on apace: And my fervent *Labour* is, That all thoſe, who make *mention* of the Name of the Lord in this *Holy Way*, may ſo *demean themſelves* in *true Self-denial*, as that, when *proved* by *Divine Wiſdom*, they may be found of that *Sound Wheat*, that not one Grain of it may be loſt.

AND, in order that it may be ſo, I intreat all, whom the Lord hath *Bleſſed* with *Families*, that they carefully obſerve the *Appearance of the Grace of God*, in every of its *Operations* and *Drawings*. And whatſoever the Lord thereby concerneth any One to do, let it be done with the *utmoſt Diligence*. So will *Parents* be *good Examples* to their *Children*, *Maſters* to their *Servants*: For the *Heads* of Families are, or ought to be, the *Lord's Miniſters* under Him, ruling their Families in the *Power of Love*, by which they

they have known a being *turned* from *Darkneſs*, to the *true Light*, *Chriſt Jeſus*: For ſurely, it is by this *Power of Love*, that we are enabled to *Order* our Families rightly, both in *Life* and *Manners*. Therefore I would Deſire, That all may ſee to the *diſcharging* of their *Duty* aright, as in the Sight of an *all-ſeeing GOD*.

AND for the *Encouragement* of the Lord's People in this *Practice*, in the Power and Wiſdom of God, I ſee *clearly*, and am *conſtrained* to leave it behind me, That the Lord requires a *Godly Care* in *Families* to be obſerved amongſt his People; and I have ſeen it to be the *only Expedient* for a *right Reformation*, and *Regulation* in the *Churches*: For, let me tell the *Backſlider*, with the *Covetous Earthly Minded*, and thoſe who are Lovers of *Pleaſure*, *more* than *God*, it is high time for ſuch to *Repent*, and do their *firſt Works*, taking *Blame* to *themſelves* for their *Unfaithfulneſs*, and the *Evil Example* they have been unto their Families; either in *trampling* upon the Teſtimonies of our faithful ſuffering Elders, by *Paying* of **Tythe** connivingly, or willingly; or any other *Evil* that the *Teſtimony of Truth* is againſt; and for the future, *redeem* the Time, by *doubling* their *Diligence*, leſt they ſhould have *Cauſe* to Repent when it is too late, and then *Horrour* will be their Portion in a *Dying Hour*.

AND

AND this farther I have to leave to the *Unfaithful*, for the *Clearing* of my *Conſcience* in the Sight of God; That if his *Love* will not prevail, neither *Immediately*, nor *Inſtrumentally*, the Lord will be *Clear* when he Judgeth, as he was in the Deſtruction of the *Old World*, together with the Cities of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*; it having been the Way of the Lord, to let thoſe who are a far off, hear what he hath done, in order that they may be *Warned*, that **hearing** and **fearing**, they may be ſaved whilſt Mercy is offer'd.

AND that this may be the *Choice* of all, is the ſincere Deſire of One, who is made willing to *ſpend* and be *ſpent* for the *Peace* and *Proſperity* of the *Church*; and that all, who profeſs to be *Members* thereof, may be ſo *Taught of the Lord*, that they may come to be *Eſtabliſhed* in *Righteouſneſs*; and, by holding out to the *End*, may receive an *Immortal Crown of Glory*, which will never fade away.

THUS as I have in great Tenderneſs, and for the Eaſe of my Spirit, left a little *Family-Exhortation* to my *Friends* and *Brethren* in this Land: It now remaineth with me, to leave a *Token* of *Love* to their *tender Children* in the City of *London*, and elſewhere.

OH!

OH! *Children* of *Believing Parents*, in whom is *Innocency*, and upon whom the *Sports* of this *World* have not yet prevailed: My Love in Chriſt is *Great* to you; believing, aſſuredly, that the *Call* of the Lord is unto you, that you may be of *His Heritage* and *Sanctuary*, in order to place His *Name* in the midſt of you: For YOU hath he choſen, above all the *Families* of the *Earth*, to *ſhew* forth His *Praiſe*, and *declare* His *Wonderful Works* to the Children of Men: Therefore my *Deſire* is, That none may *fruſtrate* the Lord in His *Gracious Intention*; but that his *Glorious Work* may be carried on, both in *Particular*, and in the *General*, to His *Praiſe*, and the Churches *Comfort*. That it may be ſo, I deſire you to take the following *Exhortation*.

Firſt, AS you grow up to Years of *Underſtanding*, ſo as to know *Good* from *Evil*, beſure you *chuſe* the *Good*, and *refuſe* the *Evil*: And if at any time you ſhould *tranſgreſs* your *Parents*, *Maſters* or *Miſtreſſes Commands*, beſure you cover it not with a **Muſſle**, or a **Lye**; for although you ought not by *any Means* to *diſobey* your *Parents*, yet if any, for want of *due Care* at any time, ſhould; it may be the *Fault* committed, may be no *great Sin* in the *Sight of God*; but if cover'd with a **wilful Lye**, a *grievous Sin* is committed, for which you muſt know *Sorrow*, if *Favour* with God you come to witneſs.

THERE-

THEREFORE, *Dear Hearts*, *Fear* God, in *doing* and *ſpeaking Truth* in all Things; for if once way be given to *Lying*, and an *Habit* of it got into, ſuch *loſe* the *Favour* of God, and *forfeit* their *Credit* with good Men.

THE next *Evil* I have to *Warn* the *Youth* of, is, To beware of an *high proud Mind*, from whence *Deſires* after the *Glory* of this *World* do proceed, which bring in a Train of *unneceſſary Cares* and *Troubles*: So that it may eaſily be ſeen, the *Proud Man* and *Woman* never wants *Miſery*, becauſe they ſeldom have a *ſettled quiet Content*; and the chief Reaſon is, They go far from God, the alone *Author* of *true Content*: *For*, as ſaith the Scripture, *the Lord beholdeth the Proud afar off*: And that Man or Woman, who grows *big* with *Conceit* of themſelves, can ſcarcely ſatisfie their *Eyes* with *ſeeing*, nor their *Appetites* with *craving*. Hence it follows, *What ſhall I Eat? What ſhall I Drink? Wherewithal ſhall I deck and adorn my ſelf?* Nay, ſaith the *inceſſant Seeker* after the *Faſhions* of this *World*, *Which is the neweſt Faſhion, Cut or Dreſs?* All this is but *Vanity*, and *Vexation of Spirit*. I take theſe to be like thoſe the Prophet ſpoke of, when he ſpeaks complaining of *Iſrael*, ſaying, *Iſrael is an empty Vine, he bringeth forth Fruit unto himſelf*. Oh you Children of *Believers!* that you may not be of this Number, neither ſeek to come up in Imitation of thoſe, who

follow the *fooliſh Faſhions* of this World, leſt you *grieve God*, and your *tender Parents*, whoſe *Love* and *Zeal* for the *Truth*, cannot admit of any ſuch *ſinful Liberty*: Therefore I beſeech you, Let your *Converſation* be without *coveting* thoſe things: and do not ſeek to *prove* the *Patience* of your *tender Parents*, by your *Murmuring* and *Reaſoning*, by bringing Examples on this wiſe, *Such Friends Children have their Cloaths made after this Faſhion, or the other*: Urging your *Parents* by your *Reaſoning*, for that which hath *no Reaſon* in it; to wit, *PRIDE*, giving them no Reſt until you have *obtained* your *Ends*. Oh! Let ſuch *Fear* in time, for thoſe things border near upon *Willful Diſobedience*; and it is to be feared, the next Step thoſe will take, will be into the *wide World* of *Wickedneſs*.

THEREFORE I entreat *Young People*, who have in any Meaſure been *Guily* of the above-mention'd *Evils*, be *humbled* before the Lord, ſtrip your ſelves of all your *vain Attire*, Repent that ever you gave Way to the Reins of your *Vain Minds*, to be drawn out after the Glory of this *World*.

THERE is alſo another *dangerous Snare*, which the Enemy ſeeks to catch *Young People* in, that is, The *Fellowſhip* and *Friendſhip* of thoſe, who do not profeſs with us; by which ſome of our *Youth*, in giving way

to frequent Walking and Converſation with them, have been *captivated* into *unequal Marriages* by *Prieſts*, who, with Sorrow it may be ſpoken, mind their *Gain*, more than the *Happineſs* of the Youth they thus Couple together: For *Miniſters for God* ought to give every *Parent* their Right, in *diſpoſing* of their *Children*: The want of which hath brought many a *Hoary Head* with Sorrow to the Grave; as alſo occaſioned many a *diſtracted languiſhing Family*, in the *Proteſtant Nations*. And I muſt ſay to all ſuch who have been privy to ſuch *hidden thieviſh Matches*, I do not ſee how they can Anſwer it to *Almighty God*, or to ſuch *Wronged Parents*.

NOW, dear Friends, Be warned, take the Apoſtle's Advice, *Be not unequally Yoaked, a Believer with an Unbeliever*, 2 Cor. 6. 14. Such Doings, though they may be ſweet in the *Taſte*, yet we have ſeen it bitter in the *going down*, viz. That thoſe, who, for want of *Watchfulneſs*, have been prevailed upon to an *unequal Yoaking*, afterwards coming to a Sight of their *Youthful Folly*, and having Children, how *bitter* hath it been to ſuch Parents, when they could not have them brought up in that *Faith*, where they believe *Salvation* is moſt ſurely to be obtained: The *Strife* that hath thereupon followed, have many times cauſed great *Diſtraction* between *Husband* and *Wife*, betwixt whom nothing ſhould be but LOVE.

AND

AND that all *Young People* may be preſerved out of this, and all other *Evils*, ſhun bad *Company*, as infectious both to *Soul* and *Body*, and let your *Spare Hours* be ſpent in *Religious Company*, or *Retirement*, reading, or meditating on *Heavenly Subjects*; of which you are bleſſed with Variety. So ſhall you come up in *Favour* with God, and all Religious People: Which, that you may, is the Sincere Deſire of my *Soul*.

AND now a few Words to thoſe *Young Men* and *Women*, who, like Brave Noble *Joſeph*, from your *Childhood* have *feared* God, and *obeyed* your Parents, *reſiſting* Temptations, both *inwardly*, and *outwardly*: To you is God's Love large, upon *your* Heads is the *Bleſſing* of *Joſeph*. Oh! you *bloſſoming Boughs*, whoſe *Ripe Fruits* will be *Holineſs* unto the Lord; You who have been Afflicted to ſee your *Brethren* and *Siſters* miſs their Way in the afore-mention'd Evils, praying for their *Return*; and when any of them do return, meet them with Joy. It is you whoſe *Branches* ſhall ſpread over the Wall of all Oppoſition, and, in the Power of the Lord, ſhall be enabled to *tread upon Scorpions*, and *overcome Evil Spirits*; for the Lord is calling to the Sons and Daughters of *Sion*, to ariſe and Work; yea, threſh the World of Wickedneſs, and he will make their *Horns Iron*, and their *Hoofs as Braſs*, they ſhall *go forth in his Name, as Silver Trumpets to the Nations*, which

which yet lies in *Idolatrous Darkneſs*; and their Wiſdom ſhall confound the Wiſdom of the Carnally Wiſe Men of this World, and bring to nought the Underſtanding of the Prudent; for it is the Lord's Will, the Earth ſhould be filled with his *Living Knowledge*: Therefore you faithful Sons and Daughters, keep in *Humility*, out of all *Self-Conceit*, and the Lord will be with you, as he was with your Faithful *Elders*; and you ſhall be a *Royal* Diadem in the Hand of our God: To whoſe *Powerful Protection* I leave you, ſincerely *Supplicating* the Lord, that the *Prodigal* may be brought Home, and the *Faithful* may be preſerved to the End of Time, that in the End we may all Reſt in thoſe *Glorious Manſions*, where the *Wicked* cannot trouble; but our *weary Souls* ſhall be at Reſt, Praiſing the Lord God and the Lamb, World without End, *Amen*.

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So, in an Earneſt of this future Bliſs, I reſt at this Time, in my ſmall Meaſure, your Faithful Friend, and well-wiſhing Siſter,

ELIZABETH JACOB.

Written in the City of *Worceſter*, the 5th of the 9th Month, 1712.

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